

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 MC-02 AID-20 EUR-25 IGA-02 EB-11 TRSE-00 PRS-01

USIE-00 DRC-01 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-10 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7711

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 3419

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECT GARBLED PARAGRAPH 1.)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS KU

SUBJ: HAWK/CROTALE COMPETITION

SUMMARY: GOK MINDEF SHAIKH SAAD HAS ASKED US EXPLAIN REUTERS NEWS ITEM WHICH STATED USG PLANNING PURCHASE CROTALE "WHICH SOME AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICIALS BELIEVE" IS "CHEAPER, MORE ACCURATE AND MORE MOBILE THAN ANY EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN EXISTING MISSILES." REQUEST REPLY BY IMMEDIATE TELEGRAM. END SUMMARY

1. DURING MEETING DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF ARMY KOREN AND GOK MINDEF SHAIKH SAAD, LATTER PRODUCED TEXT REUTER NEWS ITEM SEPT 14 (SEPTTEL) STATING USG PLANNING PURCHASE FRENCH CROTALE MISSILE AND THAT "SOME AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICIALS BELIEVE" THAT CROTALE CHEAPER, MORE ACCURATE, AND MORE MOBILE THAN ANY EXISTING EUROPEAN OR AMERICAN MISSILES. SHAIKH SAAD ASKED FOR SOME EXPLANATION OF THIS SINCE USG HAS BEEN MAINTAINING SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE OF IMPROVED HAWK. IN A PRIVATE ASIDE AMBASSADOR TOLD SAAD CROTALE COULD BE USEFUL UNDER CERTAIN CAREFULLY DEFINED CONDITIONS, SUCH AS SOME MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN, BUT THESE CONDITIONS DID NOT RPT NOT EXIST IN KUWAIT. HOWEVER BELIEVE WE NEED MORE DETAILED EXPLANATION.

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2. COMMENT: WE CONSIDER ARTICLE A FRENCH "PLANT" DESIGNED TO UNDERMINE USG SALE HAWK MISSILES TO GOK. ALSO, SOMEONE TOOK TROUBLE TO TRANSLATE ARTICLE INTO ARABIC AND PRESENT IT TO SHAIKH SAAD, PRESUMABLY PARTY FAVORING CROTALE. IT SHOWS LENGTHS COMPETITORS WILLING GO AND WE BELIEVE ARTICLE COULD WELL AFFECT OUR HAWK SALE UNLESS WE CAN EFFECTIVELY COUNTER IT.

3. IF POSSIBLE, WE WOULD LIKE AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENT THAT NO RPT NO RESPONSIBLE AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICIAL MADE ANY SUCH STATEMENT RE CROTALE MISSILE AND THAT STATEMENT IS NOT RPT NOT USG VIEW. IF USG IN FACT IS INTENDING PURCHASE CROTALE, WE WOULD LIKE EXPLANATION, POINTING OUT HOW THESE CONSIDERATIONS DO NOT RPT NOT AFFECT OUR RECOMMENDATION HAWK FOR KUWAIT. IN ADDITION, WE WOULD LIKE A CLEAR-CUT STATEMENT STATING FACTS AND FIGURES SHOWING WHY HAWK IS THE MISSILE KUWAIT NEEDS AND WHY CROTALE IS NOT ADEQUATE.

4. WE APPRECIATE DEPT AND DOD RELUCTANT TO KNOCK COMPETITOR'S PRODUCT, BUT WE BELIEVE ABOVE IS WHAT WE CLEARLY TO COUNTER THEIR TACTICS. PLEASE REPLY BY IMMEDIATE TELEGRAM.
STOLTZFUS

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